1: Rattray E, G-5 (ca. 1920)1932
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Kusase

606 will lose his wife; they can take her from him and return him the cows.'

607 603 648 *Privileged Familiarity*: 'A man may play and be familiar with his sister's husband. A man can also be familiar with his grandparents, for when a man has grand-children who drag him about, he blesses the Sky-God.[1] We, Kusase, also "play together" (*deem taba*) with the Mampruse and the Gurense, because these tribes intermarry with us, and we have never sold each other, but the Moshi we never play with, for we used to sell them for food. The Gambaga and Bawku people, however, play with the Moshi, saying when they meet one, "Where do you come from, you worthless thing; I have heard that the Chief of your town is dead?" The Moshi will reply, "You fellow with the filed teeth, get out of my way; be off with you", and he will rush right into a man's compound as if it belonged to him.

'A man's mother's brother's daughter's husband (*daki*) may beat
607 him in fun. A man can swear at his wife's brothers (*ti tu tab*); we curse each other.'

582 *Marriages Prohibited and Allowed*: 'Kusase do not marry Moshi women; they eat fowls, when they ought to eat guinea-fowls.' As long as your own wife is alive, you must not marry your wife's sister's
[587] daughter. You may marry your wife's sister while your wife is still alive, but not a *nyere*[2] sister. A son may not marry a father's widow, because a son sacrifices to his father's spirit.[3]

764 *Kusase Funeral Customs*: The Kusase do not bury even a *Yi-dan* (head of a compound) in a room or yard of his compound, but outside in the *saman* farm. The head of a compound is, however, given a separate and new grave (*yaog*); this is round with a circular bottle-neck mouth. The soil is not filled in. The mouth of the grave is covered with a pot and plastered over with earth (see Fig. 88).

Graves are not communal, at most two persons being buried in one grave. The second person so buried may not be,

(*a*) Junior to the first.
(*b*) *Nyere* to him or her.
(*c*) Any wife, save the last surviving.
(*d*) Two children may not be buried in the same grave 'because they would quarrel'.

A male is buried in a goat skin; a female buried naked, save for a

[1] A grandchild may not look into a grandparent's ears or he or she will become deaf.
[2] See p. 8. [3] But see p. 508.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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Westermann has shown[1] that the Voltaic tribes all speak languages belonging to the *Gur* group of Sudanic languages. The Mossi (or, more accurately, the Mole-Dagbane speaking) group all speak Mole-Dagbane dialects, which form a distinct branch of the *Gur* family. The people of Taleland speak a Dagbane dialect. From Zuarungu northwards Mole influence is linguistically predominant.

The cultural uniformity of the Voltaic region is equally strikingly shown in forms of social and economic organization, in custom, belief, and material culture. Though local variations are great and have important sociological implications, as we shall find, the common patterns and contents are obvious.[2]

Among the Voltaic peoples, the Mossi, the Dagomba, and the Mamprusi have centralized forms of political organization of the type common throughout West Africa. The aristocracies of the three nations claim to be kinsfolk descended from conquering immigrants who established themselves first in the country of the Mamprusi and spread northwards and southwards from there. The three paramount chiefs still maintain ceremonial ties accounted for by quasi-mythical traditions of kinship and migration well known in all three countries.

Between these centralized states stretches a block of tribes which seem to have no political unity. Each so-called tribe appears to be independent of and sporadically at enmity with its neighbours, and there is no overriding central authority. Nor does the tribe seem to have any internal political unity.

We owe to Rattray the discovery that these central Voltaic tribes comprise two major groups of communities. On the one side are those that claim to be the descendants of immigrants from parts of the country other than their present habitats. On the other side are communities that claim to be the autochthonous inhabitants. The two groups are found in every tribe, including the Mossi, Mamprusi, and Dagomba, living side by side and indistinguishable from one another by broad cultural or linguistic criteria. Many of the immigrant communities claim descent from forbears of the Mampuru ruling stock. Though now wholly amalgamated with the alleged aboriginal inhabitants, they have certain ritual observances and a system of chiefship similar to those of the Mamprusi. In fact the Paramount Chief of Mampurugu appoints many of their chiefs. But this is symbolical of kinship and ideological ties, not of political suzerainty. For though these communities may be regarded as the distant outliers of the Mampuru social and political structure, they are politically independent of the Mamprusi.

[113]

[1] Westermann, D., *Die westlichen Sudansprachen und ihre Beziehungen zum Bantu*, pp. 121 ff.; and in Rattray, R. S., *Tribes of the Ashanti Hinterland*, chap. iv.

[2] The literature on this area is scanty and of very unequal value. The following are the most informative ethnographical monographs, in order of reliability: Rattray, op. cit.; Delafosse, op. cit.; Labouret, H., *Les Tribus de Rameau Lobi*, Travaux et Mémoires de l'Institut d'Ethnologie, Paris, 1931; Tauxier, L., *Les Noirs du Soudan*, Paris, 1912; id., *Les Noirs du Yatenga*, Paris, 1917; Dim Delobsom, A. A., *L'Empire du Mogho-Naba*, Institut de Droit Comparé, Études de Sociologie et d'Ethnologie juridiques, Paris, 1932; Cardinall, A. W., *Natives of the Northern Territories of the Gold Coast*, London, 1925.

2: Fortes E-5 (1934-1937) 1945
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177 in the native social order. Apart from money and clothes, the material
167 articles, habits, and ideas which they have acquired abroad soon decay from disuse, or come to serve for ostentation only, since they have no functional relevance to the economic life and social structure of the native society.

178 The Tallensi, in short, still preserve the culture bequeathed to them by their forefathers and the social structure of their own, homogeneous society. Their economy is a primitive, static, subsistence economy. They continue to farm by the same methods and with the same tools and the same knowledge as their forefathers had. They grow no cash crops and produce no surplus of local crops for sale outside Taleland. The introduction of British currency and the opening up of the country have accelerated local exchange and slightly mitigated the hardship of winning a living by primitive technical methods from a soil of no great fertility. They have not otherwise affected the livelihood of 99 per cent. of the people.

797 Literacy and Christianity had, until 1936, barely touched the Tallensi.
872 A few children had been sent to school reluctantly in deference to the commands of the District Commissioners. Only one stayed the course and left school with a moderate command of English and the three R's. Two or three younger boys were still at school at Gambaga or T'amale. The nearest mission station to the Tallensi is that of the White Fathers at Bolaga, outside Taleland. Up to 1936 the missionaries had made only an occasional visit of reconnaissance to the nearby Tale settlements. They had succeeded in attracting only two or three Tale youths to their school. These were the sons of two ambitious, and, from the native point of view, upstart headmen who were keen to have their sons taught the white man's skills the better to serve their own political ambitions. The only one of these youths who achieved a fair degree of literacy and accepted the Christian faith was in Government employment.

177 Most of the social changes that have occurred and are taking place with
636 increasing rapidity in Taleland are due to a single powerful extraneous
648 factor, British rule. The Tallensi, in common with other tribes of these parts, put up a truculent resistance to British rule at first, and had to be subjugated by military operations and other punitive measures. The last pocket of Tale resistance, in the Tong Hills, was finally broken by a small armed force in 1911. The people of the Hills were expelled from their ancestral homes, which were razed to the ground, and lived in exile on the plains at the foot of the hills until they were permitted to return in 1935. Judging by the scanty memoranda of the Administrative officers of the decade 1911–21, the Tallensi gave them a good deal of trouble.

609 These events are still vividly remembered by the natives. Their fear
636 and suspicion of the white man was not unnatural since they had never before met him. However, their subjugation and the subsequent imposition of peace have produced in them a deep respect for the might and power of the white man. They have since learnt to have complete confidence in the justice and good intentions of the Administrative officers. They speak with gratitude of the benefits which the white man's peace

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society is a function of its segmentary relations to other like regions and to more inclusive regions, up to the limit of the widest frame of social reference relevant for that region. In consequence, social groups are identified in relation to one another by a technique of contraposition. This is very clearly seen among the Tallensi.

Cultural Segmentation of the Tallensi

From Zuarungu one can see the silhouette of the Tong Hills bounding the horizon seven miles to the south. That, say the people of Zuarungu, is where the Tallensi live. As a group they consider themselves to be quite distinct from the Tallensi, though many individuals have kinsmen among the latter—their own mothers' people, or more distant cognatic kinsmen, or affinal relatives. Even nowadays, when women and children can travel safely anywhere, intercourse between Zuarungu and the Tallensi is confined almost entirely to trade in the markets. In former times it was more than a Zuarungu man's life was worth to venture amongst the Tallensi unless he had kinsfolk there to protect him.

Between Zuarungu and the Tong Hills stretches an unbroken chain of settlements—Biuk, Ba'ari, Zubiuŋ, Tongo, Wakii, and Soog. The people of Biuk speak Gorni and consider themselves an outpost of Zuarungu. But a number of them live across the watercourse which separates their land from that of Ba'ari, side by side with Ba'ari families and farming on Ba'ari soil.[1] Such overlapping of contiguous settlements is common. The Ba'ari people are Tallensi, though a great many of them understand Gorni as easily as their mother tongue owing to their contiguity with Goris. Gorni forms have even crept into their vocabulary. Between them and their Gore neighbours there is much intermarriage; but the insistence on their distinctness remains. The picture is the same from whichever direction one enters Taleland. At Gar I was once told 'We are Namnam-Tallensi'—an accurate enough description of their linguistically and culturally intermediate position.

And yet, everywhere along the frontier the Tong Hills are pointed out as the real centre of the Tallensi. To the testimony of their neighbours may be added that of the Administration which has always regarded the Tallensi as a distinct, if amorphous, political unit.

The easiest if most superficial approach to the social structure of a society is through the nomenclature of social identification, the techniques by which people sort out their relations to one another in order to know how to conduct themselves. But nomenclature, like the conduct it tends to precipitate, is always a function of a situation, not an absolute classification.

Foreigners and their neighbours have a single label for all the Tallensi. The latter equally make no distinction in nomenclature between one Goreŋ and another, or one Nabt and another, no matter where he may come from, when the circumstances require no more precise specification.

This technique of identification is based on locality, direction, propinquity, and actual or alleged contrasts of language and institutions; it is a technique of contraposition arising from the segmentary structure of the society, and is the commonest method of social classification employed

[1] And Biuk is also linked to the Tallensi by clanship as we shall see (Ch. IV).

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184 764 undercurrent of passion and tension. When a *dee* parade reaches the border between adjacent Namoo and Talis settlements, there is a danger of a hostile demonstration from the other side and the older men have [579] to be very watchful. In 1936 a Tongo *dee* parade was attacked by a group of Gbeog men who were simply swept off their feet by the sight and sound of the armed mob of their traditional enemies.

184 One is constantly reminded of the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in less dramatic ways, too, for they are for ever contrasting themselves. The Namoos scoff in private at the esoteric ritual practices of the Talis, the non-Namoos everywhere vaunt their superiority, as the true 'owners of the land', to the immigrant Namoos. And, at the same time, the politico-ritual leaders of each group keep jealous watch on those of the other to see that their mutual bonds of politico-ritual collaboration [123] are maintained. The most serious obstruction I had to overcome in my field work was the passive resistance of the Talis inspired by my initial association with the Tongo Namoos.

This cleavage comes to the fore in different ways in different parts of Taleland. It is most precisely worked out in the Tongo district, where it dominates the politico-ritual relations of group to group. It is justifiable, moreover, to see a connexion between this and the fact that the Tong Hills, the most conspicuous landmark in the country, are universally accepted as the centre of the 'real Talis'. Though many Hill Talis clans claim to be of immigrant descent, they are socially alined with the alleged aboriginal clans. This in itself would suggest that the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos is not an artifact of history but the expression of a deep-lying principle of social organization in Tale society.

184 796 Furthermore, it is evident that the natives visualize their society as composed of three major regions, the region of the 'real Talis', the region of Tongo and the clans adjacent to it, and the region of the clans adjacent to the Namnam. These regions are not, however, precisely defined socio-geographic territories. They overlap one another and merge into one another. They also overlap adjacent regions of non-Tale clans; but the Tallensi lay no stress on this, for they are differentiated by the index of the Great Festivals. Each region has its particular form of Harvest Festival, but the Great Festivals of the Tallensi constitute a single cycle. The festivals specific to the different regions follow a fixed sequence in relation to one another, and this is a matter of ritual obligation, not merely of convenience. Thus the very index which in certain perspectives and certain situations serves to differentiate the three regions of Tale society, in other perspectives and other situations serves to demonstrate their interdependence and overlapping.

184 796 648 In addition, the cycle of Great Festivals embraces clans of Goris, Namnam, and Mamprusi on the frontiers of Taleland. These clans take the cue for the date of their particular Harvest Festivals from neighbouring Tale clans, and in turn pass on the signal to other non-Tale clans, though they themselves fall outside the normal frame of social reference of the 'real Talis', upon whom the cycle pivots. The best example of this is Nuŋ, a tiny settlement between Biuŋ and the White Volta. Politically and ritually the people of Nuŋ are Mamprusi. The head of the settlement

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holds an important ritual office connected with the paramount chiefship of Mampurugu. But, as befits their interstitial socio-geographic position between the Mamprusi and the Tallensi, their Harvest Festival belongs to the Tale cycle and is, in fact, the last of one of the series constituting the cycle.

The differentiation of Taleland into lesser regions follows the same general principle as the differentiation of the Mole-Dagbane-speaking peoples into 'tribes'. A region is a socio-geographic segment of the society in which the communities that constitute it have a greater degree of interdependence and cohesion with one another than any of them have with other neighbouring communities. And this interdependence and cohesion is a function of the common interests symbolized in the Great Festivals. The regions overlap in so far as the communities belonging to one region have other interests in common with and other loyalties towards communities belonging to a neighbouring region.

This is the façade of Tale society. Behind it lie the bricks and mortar of the social structure. It is at that level of Tale social life that we must look for the foundations of the principles of social organization whose superficial action we have met with in this chapter.

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X618 The Gbizug legend of how Ligər yidɛm came to dwell at Tongo is well known to Tongo elders who are versed in such matters, and is regarded by them as true. It would never, of course, be brought up in public, especially if any Ligər yidɛm were present. The elders of Ligər yidɛm accept this story, but they would be indignant at any suggestion that it is in any way derogatory. The assimilated lineages at Tongo stand in a marginal relation to the authentic posterity of Mosuor, and this is reflected in the general attitude of tacit discretion about their presumed origins and the disabilities these entail. These cannot be covered up, and no upright person would wish to do so; but they are not matters of which a public display is made unless there is a really serious issue at stake.

X618 ●648 It is unnecessary to describe at length the lineage structure of Yaməlag and Biuk, both of which closely resemble Tongo. At Biuk we enter the country of the Gərisi. Not only do the people of Biuk, though linked by ties of clanship with Mosuor biis, speak Gərni and practise some Gəre customs not found among the Tallensi, but they are also linked by clanship ties, through intercalary lineages, with the Gərisi of Zuarungu. These clan linkages of the people of Biuk with Gərisi are not known to the people of Tongo, Yaməlag, and Sie, nor are they of any interest to them. Biuk marks the limit of their frame of social reference, though the chain of clanship ties which links them to one another extends beyond it, across the frontier of linguistic and cultural variation.

X618 Our analysis of the clan structure of Mosuor biis and their clanship ties with other units may be summed up in the following table and diagram. For the sake of simplicity Yaməlag and Biuk are omitted, since they constitute only a wider ramification of the structural arrangements represented in the table.

TONGO

Authentic lineages (grouped in four major segments of the sub-clan)	have ties of clanship with	All Yaməlag All Sie All Biuk
Accessory lineages (distributed amongst the four major segments; no corporate organization *inter se*)	have ties of clanship, extended from those of the authentic lineages with	All Yaməlag All Sie All Biuk
One assimilated lineage (Ligər yidɛm)	has, in addition, ties of clanship with	Gbizug (Talis)

SIE PROPER

Authentic lineages (forming three major segments)	have ties of clanship with	All Tongo All Yaməlag All Biuk

These ties of clanship extended to the accessory lineages at Sie.

Authentic lineage (A) (Bayana yidɛm)	has ties of clanship with	Lineage (D) (Daaŋ yidɛm) of Sie-datɔk
Authentic lineage (B) (Sa-tɪŋərdɛm)	has ties of clanship with	Lineage (E) (Kaləŋkas yidɛm) of Sie-datɔk

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CHAPTER V

THE DISTRIBUTION OF THE NAMOOS

The Distinctive Ritual Observances of the Namoos

602 648 CLUSTERED about the chain of sub-clans that makes up the clan of Mosuor biis are a number of other Namoo communities. None of them has ties of clanship with Mosuor biis; yet the latter speak of them as *ti buurət*, our stock, or *ti mabiis*, our kin. The emphasis here is on the common Mampuru origin claimed for all Namoos. It is widely known among the Tallensi that groups of people claiming to be of Mampuru origin are found scattered throughout the Northern Territories and the adjacent parts of the French Haute Volta. Though they have no political or social ties with them, Tale Namoos assert that they are of the same stock (*buurət*) as the Mossi in French territory, the Dagomba in British territory, and the various clans claiming Mampuru origin among the Gorisi, the Namnam, the Kusaasi, the Bulisi, and other neighbouring groups.

171 784 Whether or no these people reached their present locations by migration from Mampurugu, it is a fact that they all have certain ritual observances in common, and most of them keep up quasi-political or ceremonial ties with the dominant section of the Mamprusi, who share these distinctive ritual observances. In all these groups of people a man's first-born son and first-born daughter may not eat the domestic fowl, are forbidden, during their father's lifetime, to wear any of his garments or his quiver [764] and to enter or even look into his granary. Amongst all of them a man's corpse is girded with a goatskin loin-cover (*bə suona buu*) ritually decorated with three cowrie shells; and one of their most solemn oaths is to swear by 'my father and his goatskin and his three cowrie shells (*mba ni u buu ni u ligəri ata*)'—a reference to this burial custom.

184 784 These are infallible tests. A number of other ritual observances and doctrines mostly connected with mortuary and funeral ceremonies are also distinctive of Namoos. Thus, if a man is survived by his first-born son and daughter, or by either, special rites are performed to release them from the taboo on using their father's garments, weapons, and granary; and the concluding rites of a Namoo funeral are also distinctive. But these ritual observances and the notions connected with them vary in detail and nuance from clan to clan and even between segments of a single clan. Some Namoo clans and clan segments have discriminative totems similar to those of non-Namoo clans in addition to the first-born child's avoidances. They may be totems associated with the locality in which they have settled, as for instance the leopard avoidance of the people of Dkoog (Winkogo); or they may be totems symbolizing the mythical event to which the clan or lineage in question attributes its original differentiation from other like units, as, for instance, the avoidance of the crocodile (*bay*) by one major segment of Bayana yidem at Sie. Special myths often validate these avoidances, which serve thus to distinguish a particular clan or lineage from other Namoos in Taleland.

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men declared fervently '*ti a dɔyam*—we are consanguineous kin'. Let no one betray this kinship in the future; and if a man of either clan does so, let the ancestors and the Earth visit punishment on him. *Dɔyam* was used here to express in the most emphatic way both the state that it was desirable to maintain between the two clans and the special cordiality they felt for one another on this signal occasion of a ceremonial reconciliation after a long breach in their good relations. Similarly, when Tallensi wished to express particular cordiality towards, and confidence in, me they used to say, with great self-satisfaction, '*Nyɛn pana ɛŋ ti dɔyam*—you have now become our kinsman'.

The concept *dɔyam* is the link between the individual's notion of ritual collaboration as a function of kinship and the common idea that ritual collaboration between corporate units is a sign of a corresponding genealogical connexion. For consanguineous kinship[1] is the fundamental condition that permits individuals to join together in a common ritual activity, and the individual's scheme of ritual values is linked to his social frame of reference through the medium of his kinship ties. It is in his relations with his consanguineous kinsfolk that a person has the most direct experience of that amity and solidarity which are assumed to be intrinsic to all ties of ritual collaboration.

The Network of Structural Ties among the Gɔrisi and in the Sie District

The intricate network of structural ties and cleavages that links the Talis clans and lineages among themselves stretches across into the country of the Gɔrisi. There, at Bɔlɔga, at Zuarungu, and elsewhere, we find similar aggregations of local clans and lineages, differentiated from one another and interlinked in a similar pattern to that which we discovered among the Talis; but from the superficial inquiries I was able to make, it seemed that the organization is much less elaborate among the Gɔrisi than among the Talis. These clusters of Gɔre clans and lineages adjacent to the Tallensi are hooked on to the Tale cluster by intercalary lineages such as the Biuk Namoos and Sanaab biis at Bɔlɔga. Thus, Sanaab biis are connected with Ba'ari (cf. p. 88) both by spatial proximity and by ties of clanship, but they lie outside the social horizon of an average member of any of the Hill Talis clans.

The same pattern of interlinked structural ties is found also among the non-Namoo clans and lineages of the Sie district, but again it is not so elaborate and complete a system as that of the Talis. In this district we find the same type of composite clan bearing a local name, considering itself a unit, expressing its corporate identity and solidarity in its relationship to *bɔyar* and *tɛŋ*, and composed of relatively autonomous maximal lineages each with its own lineage head holding a particular ritual office. Again we find contiguous maximal lineages linked with one another by ties of clanship and of clanship-by-courtesy.

But in this area the chains of linkage are more variable than among the Talis. Political and territorial ties often unite neighbouring groups which

[1] As opposed to affinal kinship (*deem*) which is the prototypical social relationship that excludes sacrificing together.

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among the Talis would be linked by clanship as well. There is therefore greater variation in the degree of overlapping between the fields of clanship of contiguous lineages than among the Talis.

Some clans in this area are closed units forming by themselves a miniature replica of the whole system. Thus, Duusi proper consists of three maximal lineages, bound together by ties of clanship, but none having clanship ties with any other lineages or clans. These three lineages are said to be 'consanguineous kin with one another (*dɔŋam ni taaba*)'. But there is no myth to account for their coalescence, nor is it rationalized by genealogical fictions. They are structurally differentiated in a similar way to the maximal lineages of Zoo. Thus, one lineage has the exclusive right to the chiefship, another to the tendaanaship, and the third to the ritual office of Yiraan, which holds the balance between chiefship and tendaanaship. The ritual observances of the three maximal lineages differ from one another and they have no common ancestral *bɔŋar*. One focus of integration for the whole of Duusi is the supreme *tɔŋgban*, Ziug, whose custody is vested in the lineage that holds the tendaanaship, but whose cult requires the co-operation of the other lineages as well. The other focus of integration is the chiefship, which demands both political co-operation and ritual collaboration among all three maximal lineages.

The loose articulation of this set of clans as compared with the Talis is reflected in their lack of a common appellation. One reason for this, no doubt, is that the line of cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos in terms of structural relations, ritual observances, and politico-ritual roles and offices, is not so clear cut as in the Tongo district. At Sie, where it is most precise, the Namoos are identified as *naditib*, those who hold (lit. eat) the chiefship, in contraposition to the *tɛndaanditib*, those who hold the office of tendaana, namely the people of Sawalɔg and Tendaaŋ; and this cleavage runs parallel to their clanship relations and ritual observances. (Throughout the area, as among the Gɔrisi and Namnam, a settlement or part of a settlement occupied by *tɛndaanditib* is usually referred to as Tendaaŋ, and *tɛndaanditib* lineages are often described as Tendaaŋdem.) But in several other clans *naditib* and *tɛndaanditib* are constituent maximal lineages of the same clan. This is similar to the distribution of ritual offices amongst the maximal lineages of a Talis clan; but in this case the *naditib* lineages are usually Namoos, whereas the *tɛndaanditib* lineages fall into line with non-Namoo clans like Sawalɔg and Sie-Tendaaŋ in their ritual observances and social alliances. Among these clans, therefore, the ties of clanship often cut across the cleavage between Namoos and non-Namoos; the social and political alinements of clans or maximal lineages in accordance with their ritual observances cut across their alinements by clanship ties. The general effect is to link Namoos and non-Namoos more closely together than in the Tongo district, but in a looser system than is found among the Hill Talis.[1]

The *tɛndaanditib* clans and maximal lineages of the Sie district declare

[1] *Naditib* is compounded of *na'am*, chiefship and *di* to eat—here in its metaphorical meaning of 'to have the prerogative of an office'—and the plural suffix *-b* (< *ba*), people; *tɛndaanditib* comes in the same way from *tɛndaan*, *di*, and *-b*.

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is to pay over the gifts and sacrifices he has promised the *Bɔyar* in return. Later, when the child is old enough to travel, it is brought to the *Bɔyar* to be ritually dedicated to it and named, and thus brought into communion with it. Wards of the *Bɔyar* have prescribed names according to their order of birth. First-borns are always Tɔŋ or Bɔyare; later children have names compounded of these two names and suffixes indicative of sex or birth order—Tɔndoog or Tɔnpɔk or Tanzoo, and so forth. A girl ward must remain chaste until she marries; and when she is given in marriage she has to be released from this bond by means of gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* before she goes to her husband.

The ritual dominion of the Hill Talis' External *Bɔya* extends, also, to whole clans and lineages of non-Tale tribes as we shall see later. Here it is enough to mention that every External *Bɔyar* of the Hill Talis has a traditional network of client lineages and clans among the adjacent non-Tale tribes, the Mamprusi, Dagomba, Bulisi, Woolisi, and even Mossi; and nowadays also in Ashanti and the Colony. Every year, at the time of the Harvest Festivals, these client lineages send messengers with gifts and sacrifices to the *Bɔyar* to which they adhere, to give thanks for the benefits of the past year and to pray for good crops, good health, peace, and offspring during the coming year. Client lineages also observe the totemic and other ritual rules of the *Bɔyar*. From time to time reciprocal visits are paid to the client lineages by representatives of the Hill Talis lineages that sponsor them before the *Bɔyar*. These visitors, coming as emissaries of the *Bɔyar*, are received with the hospitality due to honoured kinsmen and travel long distances in hostile country under the safe conduct of their client associates without danger. It is chiefly from its client lineages that pilgrims come to a particular *Bɔyar*.

The personal totemic avoidances of wards of a Talis *Bɔyar* are instances of a more general rule. It often happens that a child's spirit-guardian is a matrilateral ancestor or ancestress, its father's maternal grandfather, for instance. Then the ward (*sɛyɔraan*) is obliged to observe the totemic avoidances which were held by his spirit-guardian during the latter's lifetime. He must do so, according to native doctrine, because he will have to offer sacrifices throughout his lifetime to his spirit-guardian; and as a sacrifice is an act of communion, both between the living, and between the living and the dead, he would be unable either to offer or to partake of sacrifices to his spirit-guardian if he did not keep the latter's taboos. Thus he would nullify the bond of mystical tutelage and lay himself open to inevitable disasters. He would also gravely damage his relations with the agnatic descendants of his spirit-guardian, upon whom falls the duty of maintaining the cult of the latter's spirit and whom he will sometimes have to join in sacrifice. There are many people among the Namoos who observe Talis taboos for this reason, and many Talis who avoid both the totems of their own clan and those of other clans as well. The fowl taboo of the Namoos is an exception to this rule, for the obvious reason that it is restricted to first-born children. Even if a man had to avoid the fowl in his lifetime, it ceases to be relevant after his death, and is no longer remembered by his descendants. But the rule does apply to the ancillary totems of those Namoo clans and lineages that have any, such as the

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613 561 Seniority (*kpɛmət*) is defined by four criteria, singly or in combination according to the situation and the group involved. These are age, generation, social maturity, and status. A youth of 18 is always a 'child (*bii*)'; a man of 40 calls himself a 'child' if his father is still alive, but will be counted among the *kpɛm* if he is head of a nuclear lineage. A chief is always a *kpeem* irrespective of his age or generation.

Succession to lineage headship depends on one very important rule.[1] Within the range of recognized generation differences—that is, at the widest the medial lineage—succession goes by generation, not by age. The son begotten by an old man towards the end of his life takes precedence over his much older grandson. Beyond that range succession goes by age. This is summed up in the maxim 'Generation differences do not cross the *dug* (*dɔɣam pu yakət dug la*)'. This rule is a source of frequent discord.

613 [554] No doubt because of their equalitarian social system and their segmentary social structure, Tallensi attach exceptional prestige value to the attainment of lineage headship, especially in the higher orders of lineage segmentation. Rival claims to headships of greater than medial lineages are based on varying interpretations of the rule of seniority. Thus Yinyɛla of Tɔŋ-Puhug (see pp. 195–6) claimed seniority by generation over all the other elders of Lɛbhtiis yir and demanded redress for having been cheated, as he said, of succession to the headship of Puhug thirty-five years or so before. The other elders declared that Puhug had 'spread' genealogically (*eŋ yaləŋa*) so much since the time of Yinyɛla's grandfather that succession by seniority of generation no longer held outside the inner lineage.

In every maximal lineage (or among Mosuor biis, sub-clan) there is a hierarchy of lineage heads corresponding to the hierarchy of segments and the hierarchy of *bɔɣar* shrines. Obviously a particular lineage head may be head of several segments of different orders. Thus Deemzeet (see p. 194) is head of his nuclear lineage, his medial lineage, and of the whole section of Puhug. At the apex stands the head of the maximal lineage or sub-clan whose status practically always carries with it politico-ritual office. This has an important bearing on the working of the lineage system. Every head of a less than maximal lineage stands for his segment, sometimes in opposition to other segments of the lineage. The head of the maximal lineage is raised above the sectional interests of the segments by his politico-ritual office. He is bound by that office to think of himself as representing the whole maximal lineage and its common interests, irrespective of the segment to which he happens to belong. This is symbolized by his having custody of the focal ancestor shrine of the maximal lineage and is sanctioned by the investment of his position with special ritual status. Though only *primus inter pares*, like all lineage heads, he has the added moral and ritual authority of his office, due to his being identified with the founding ancestors.[2]

[1] This rule and its far-reaching implications are fully discussed in the next volume of this study.

[2] This has often misled Administrative officers faced with rival claimants to jurisdiction in certain areas. When a chief or tendaana says of another 'I gave

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613 Tallensi say that lineage headship is conferred by inheritance of, or succession to (the same term, *vaa*, vb. is used for both), firstly, the custody of the founding ancestor's shrine (*bɔyar*), and secondly the patrimonial property (*faar*), in particular the home farm (*sʊman*) of the lineage. Within the nuclear lineage, or at most the inner lineage, both conditions apply; beyond that limit lineage headship does not confer title to land, except in a few special cases; it is determined solely by succession to the custody of the *bɔyar*. The rules of inheritance and succession are backed by the most powerful sanctions of the ancestor cult and supported by the whole fabric of the social system. Within the medial lineage inheritance disputes occur so rarely as to be negligible. This is a reflection of the strong solidarity of this unit, and of the recognition of classificatory fatherhood within it. Beyond that range succession disputes are settled either by the arbitration of the maximal lineage head or by an appeal to the ancestors through divination or an oracle test.

613 577 The range of application of the two conditions of *kpɛmɔt* define the gradation of powers and functions discharged by lineage heads. Within the nuclear (or at most inner) lineage the head has paternal authority[1] associated with his control of the farm-land and of the labour of his dependants. He has corresponding jural and ritual responsibilities for the junior members of the lineage. Formally, his is the decisive voice in all matters in which the lineage emerges as a corporate unit—for example, in the disposal of the daughters in marriage and in the payment of bride-price for sons' wives. Beyond the nuclear lineage the lineage head's powers and authority are purely moral and ritual. He cannot, for instance, command the services of any member of the lineage (outside his nuclear lineage) as of right, nor is he responsible for any of them in such matters as bride-price payments. And the degree to which he commands the loyalty of his lineage co-members depends considerably on his personality. They will always support him unhesitatingly where the common interests of the lineage are concerned, but they might not, in private matters, treat him with the confidence due to his status if he lacks tact or tries to be dictatorial. A lineage head represents the lineage. He is the pivot of its corporate unity. Everything he does as lineage head is for and on behalf of the lineage. Hence he never takes action in corporate affairs without consulting and obtaining the consent of the heads of all the component segments of the lineage. In fact a lineage head very rarely takes action in corporate matters without the presence of all the senior male members of the lineage. Thus it is common for the initiative and drive in corporate activities to come from younger men of intelligence and forceful personality, though they are carried out by, or in the name of, the lineage head. This is especially the case when, as often happens, lineage heads are old and infirm. Tinta'alɔm's senility did not diminish the respect and affection in which he was held by all the people

613 him land to dwell on and therefore I am his superior' he must not be taken literally. He is referring to a tradition of settlement going back to the founding ancestors of their lineages.

[1] We analyse the function of classificatory fatherhood and of paternal authority in the lineage more fully in the second volume of this study.

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178 438 578 [556] precedence over the others. All are equally essential for the maintenance of the social equilibrium and competition between them is absolutely excluded. Now the possibility has arisen of acquiring unlimited wealth through these same offices, by a miracle, almost, and from external sources. They have become commercially valuable. And the Tallensi, perhaps because of their great poverty of material goods, their general equality of wealth, and their undifferentiated productive system, are extremely acquisitive. Some of them have shown a natural cupidity for riches and power, and a skill in the pursuit of these gratifications, for which their native way of life formerly gave little scope.

794 648 In our references to the cult of the External *Bɔyar* we discussed chiefly the significance of the *Bɔyar* for the interrelations of the Hill Talis clans among themselves. But, as we have mentioned, the cult also has an important role in the external relations of these clans. Each *Bɔyar* has a well-defined sphere of influence in one or other of the tribes adjacent to the Tallensi, or within easy access of the Tong Hills, the Mamprusi, the Bulisi, the Woolisi, the Gɔrisi, and even some of the Mossi sub-tribes. Thus a number of villages in the south-west of Mampurugu are in the sphere of interest of Bona'ab, the *Bɔyar* of which Kpata'ardem are the senior custodians, whereas many villages in the south-east of Mampurugu come into the sphere of influence of the Degal *Bɔyar*. The villages are further divided up so that each of the maximal lineages belonging to a *Bɔyar* congregation has several villages, or sections of several villages, as its particular clients. This aspect of the cult is by no means a mere side-line. It is an intrinsic and obviously old-established feature of it. The best proof of this is the fact that Hill Talis clans which claim to be of immigrant origin usually cite those parts of the adjacent non-Tale areas where they have client villages as their probable homes of origin. Similarly the ritual officials of these villages whom we mention below often explain their association with the External *Bɔyar* cult of the Talis by a myth of descent from an immigrant from the Tong Hills.

794 788 648 From these client villages, as we have already learnt, pilgrims come to the *Bɔyar* regularly, particularly in the dry season. They come individually to supplicate for health, prosperity, and especially for the boon of children. As children born in answer, ostensibly, to such requests are the spiritual wards of the *Bɔyar*, many pilgrims come as 'children of the *Bɔyar*' to offer thanksgiving gifts and sacrifices, or atonement sacrifices for a misdeed. But more important are the pilgrims who come annually as official representatives of their villages. They are usually the tendaanas of the villages, and they come to beg for the blessings of the *Bɔyar* on the village, for its health, and for a successful farming year; or if there has been sickness, or a failure of crops or any other misfortune in the past year, to bring atoning sacrifices to the *Bɔyar*. The ritual offices these men hold in their own villages are under the aegis of the *Bɔyar*; and through them the *Bɔyar* exercises considerable influence in the affairs of a client village. For to these outsiders the *Bɔyar* is an oracle as well as a shrine, manifesting itself through the medium of a mysterious subterranean voice, whose advice, admonitions, and demands are interpreted by its custodians.

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This aspect of the *Bɔyar* cult had great economic and social importance, in the past, for the Hill Talis. The pilgrims bring gifts of salt, cloth, hoes and so forth, nominally for the *Bɔyar*, that is, the Primordial Ancestor, who is believed to manifest himself in the oracular voice. Actually these gifts are secretly shared among the heads of the maximal lineages which own the particular *Bɔyar*. Nowadays these gifts are of small, though by no means negligible, worth, for all these commodities can be bought in any market, far more cheaply than in the past. But in the past they represented a valuable source of supply of scarce and highly prized goods.

Again, the visits of the pilgrims are annually reciprocated by a visit to the client village of representatives of the Talis lineage which is its sponsor with the *Bɔyar* to which it owes ritual allegiance. These ritual visits are made in order to consecrate local shrines representing the *Bɔyar*, to release pilgrims and children born to them from special taboos, and to perform the ritual shaving of the children by which they are formally placed under the spiritual guardianship of the *Bɔyar*. But these services are paid for in cowries and other gifts, and portions of the animals sacrificed are taken home and added to the meat supply of the sponsors. Young men go along on these ritual tours carrying fowls for sale in the client villages, and sometimes buy grain or yams in return.

The pilgrim traffic was, therefore, in former times an economic asset of the first importance as the Hill Talis and their neighbours themselves point out. It gave them also a wider range of social and cultural relationships than their own restricted community. People travelling to and from the Tong Hills on ritual errands carried the sacred emblems of the *Bɔyar* cult and were safe from molestation.

Some twenty years ago the pilgrim traffic took a new turn. Tallensi were coming into contact with Ashanti and the coast, and thus news of the Tong Hills 'fetishes' reached those areas. Men from the Hills, with a mixture of inborn business acumen and sincere faith in the magical powers of their oracle cult, advertised the cult quietly. A trickle of pilgrims from these wealthy and comparatively sophisticated areas began to flow northwards. And the trickle soon became a broad stream. Rich and poor, farmers, traders, chiefs, commoners, literate and illiterate, pagans and Christians joined the stream. To-day this traffic is a major industry of the Tong Hills.

These pilgrims[1] from the south come with extraordinarily varied wishes to lay before the *Bɔyar*. They beg for children, for health, for wealth, for power, for the success of farming and business enterprises, for victory in litigation, for help in a career or in the prosecution of political aims. Most important of all, Ashanti and Colony medicine men come to purchase the privilege of ritual clientship of the *Bɔyar*. They receive the right to

[1] I am indebted to Dr. M. J. Field, formerly Government Anthropologist, Gold Coast, for some information on the Colony end of this traffic. See also her *Religion and Medicine of the Ga People* for references to 'Nana Tongo' and her paper 'Some New Shrines of the Gold Coast and their Significance', *Africa*, xiii. 2, 1940. Rattray, op. cit., vol. ii, pp. 361 ff., gives a vivid description of the ceremony at the Tɔŋna'ab *Bɔyar* when hundreds of southern pilgrims come to present their pleas and register their vows.

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significance. From childhood on a person's relation to the economic system is chiefly determined by sex. In the kinship system sex operates as a differentiating factor from an equally early age, from the time, in fact, when a child learns to designate like-sex siblings by different terms from opposite-sex siblings. Local, lineage, or family institutions also act as differentiating factors, though not in the same way. This is a consequence in part of the peculiarities of Tale political structure. Local groupings, clans and lineages are asymmetrically linked *inter se* and with communities outside the Tale area proper by political, genealogical, territorial, or ritual ties. The most striking case of this sort is presented by the Hill Talis who have immemorial ritual links with villages and genealogical groups among Dagomba, Mamprussi, Bulisi (Builsa), Woolisi (Kassena), Mossi, and other neighbouring peoples. Each of the Hill communities has its exclusive associates in these foreign areas. The people of Sii were traditionally associated with the Bulisi, the people of Gorogo with the Woolisi, the Kpata'ar clan with certain villages of Black Dagomba, and so forth. There was in former times, and is even more so now, a constant traffic between the Tong Hills and the outside areas linked with the clans dwelling there—pilgrims coming to the Fertility Shrines in the Hills and Talis paying ceremonial visits to their associates. But the economic and political by-products of this traffic were most important. In this way a range of geographical and social contacts was, and is, available to a member of the Hill clans which no Namoos had, and among the Hill clans themselves the actual contacts varied from clan to clan. The Namoos again have their traditional political associates among the Mamprussi. It is especially interesting to note that the Mamprussi associates of the Hill Talis and the Mamprussi associates of the Namoos belonged to a single political structure; yet the latter would not, a generation ago, have hesitated to overpower and enslave any Hill Talis they encountered defenceless.

Factors of this sort become significant only after adolescence and more so in the life of men than of women; but they are operative even in childhood. The Black Dagomba guests at a Kpata'ar elder's homestead are familiar figures to his children; and one sign of the interest taken in them by the children is the fact that most Kpata'ar youths understand and easily speak the dialect of the Black Dagomba, whereas other Tallensi do not.